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Your choice of foods and the way you eat them is paramount in reducing your risk of chronic diseases and especially mitigating your risk of depression, which is overwhelmingly related with stress mainly caused by either personal or professional relationships. Managing food intake could be one of the cheapest and harmless methods to guarantee good health and overall well-being.

Here is one of the best tips for your daily nutrition intake:

- Many standard recipes call for more sugar, salt or fat than is necessary:
- Try using half the amount of sugar called for.
- Substitute skim milk, low-fat or nonfat yogurt, or low-fat cottage cheese (pureed in a blender with a little lemon juice) for whole milk, cream or sour cream.
- Use two egg whites instead of a whole egg.
- Use herbs and lemon or lime juice for seasoning vegetables in place of butter.
- Use nonstick pans.
- Marinate meat, poultry, and fish in herb-flavored vinegar, wine, lemon juice, well-seasoned broth, or low-sodium soy sauce instead of oil-based marinades.

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Cheese: The Newest Health Food?

From tangy cheddar to ripe-and-moldy blue, could cheese have a hidden health talent? Hmmm. Research says maybe so. A new German study suggests cheese is actually a cancer fighter. But before you pick up that slicer, you need to learn how to harness this superpower the right way so you don't clog your arteries.

Slicing Cancer Risk

Turns out that cheese is a rich source of menaquinones, a type of vitamin K that switches on genes in the body that knock out cancer cells. And when German researchers tracked the health and diets of over 24,000 people for up to 10 years, they found that those who ate the most cheese reduced their risk for fatal cancers by 28 percent -- presumably because they got the most menaquinones. But here's the major caveat: The biggest cheese-eaters in the study didn't go overboard. They got just 29 grams a day, the equivalent of about an ounce of cheese or one deli slice.

Ohhh, Okay!

To get ample amounts of menaquinones, don't rely on cheese alone, because you'll get an overload of artery-clogging, calorie-laden saturated fat, too. A better bet? Diversify. Egg yolks and chicken are also good sources. And get plenty of leafy greens. There's new evidence that most of us need more of the bone-friendly form of K found in spinach, romaine lettuce, kale, collards, and more. (But if you're on a blood thinner, such as warfarin, talk to your doctor first.)

Source:RealAge 2010



Top 10 Foods for Healthy Hair!

"Lather, rinse, repeat" may be standard advice, but shampoo and conditioner alone won't give you the healthy hair you crave. For the most luxurious locks possible, you'll need to step out of the shower, and into the kitchen.

"Your hair grows about 1/4 to 1/2 inch every month, and the foundation of all of our new hair, skin, and nail growth is the nutrients we eat," says Dawn Jackson Blatner, RD, a Chicago-based dietitian. "If you eat a healthy diet, you will grow stronger and healthier cells throughout your entire body — inside and out."

If you were born with fine, thin hair, you'll never have rope-thick tresses — no matter what you eat — but a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of growth-promoting protein and iron can make a difference, say nutrition and hair experts. And beware of dietary supplements often marketed to thicken hair or make it grow faster. They may backfire.

"Even though you can find beauty supplements on the shelves of most stores, try to get the nutrients you need from foods whenever possible," Paradi Mirmirani, MD, a dermatologist in Vallejo, Calif., tells WebMD. "In rare instances, excess supplementation of certain nutrients, such as vitamin A, has been linked to hair loss."



Healthy Hair Food No. 1: Salmon

When it comes to foods that pack a beauty punch, it's hard to beat salmon. Loaded with omega-3 fatty acids, this high-quality protein source is also filled with vitamin B-12 and iron.

"Essential omega-3 fatty acids are needed to support scalp health," says Andrea Giancoli, MPH, RD, a dietitian in Los Angeles and a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. "A deficiency can result in a dry scalp and thus hair, giving it a dull look."

Vegetarian? Include one or two tablespoons of ground flaxseed in your daily diet for some plant-based omega-3 fats.

Healthy Hair Food No. 2: Dark Green Vegetables

Popeye the Sailor Man didn't eat all that spinach for healthy hair, but he could have. Spinach, like broccoli and Swiss chard, is an excellent source of vitamins A and C, which your body needs to produce sebum. The oily substance, secreted by your hair follicles, is the body's natural hair conditioner.

Dark green vegetables also provide iron and calcium.

Healthy Hair Food No. 3: Beans

Beans, beans, they're good for your ... hair? Yes, it's true. Legumes like kidney beans and lentils should be an important part of your hair-care diet. Not only do they provide plentiful protein to promote hair growth, but ample iron, zinc, and biotin. While rare, biotin deficiencies can result in brittle hair.

Blatner, who is also a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association, recommends three or more cups of lentils or beans each week.

...continuing



Top 10 Foods for Healthy Hair (cont.)

Healthy Hair Food No. 4: Nuts

Do you go nuts for thick, shiny hair? You should. Brazil nuts are one of nature's best sources of selenium, an important mineral for the health of your scalp. Walnuts contain alpha-linolenic acid, an omega-3 fatty acid that may help condition your hair. They are also a terrific source of zinc, as are cashews, pecans, and almonds. A zinc deficiency can lead to hair shedding, so make sure nuts are a regular on your healthy hair menu.

Healthy Hair Food No. 5: Poultry

Chickens and turkeys may have feathers, but the high-quality protein they provide will help give you the healthy hair you crave.

"Without adequate protein or with low-quality protein, one can experience weak brittle hair, while a profound protein deficiency can result in loss of hair color," Giancoli said.

Poultry also provides iron with a high degree of bioavailability, meaning your body can easily reap its benefits.

Healthy Hair Food No. 6: Eggs

When it comes to healthy hair, it doesn't matter whether you like your eggs scrambled, fried, or over easy. However they're served up, eggs are one of the best protein sources you can find.

They also contain biotin and vitamin B-12, which are important beauty nutrients.

Healthy Hair Food No. 7: Whole Grains

Sink your teeth into hearty whole grains, including whole-wheat bread and fortified whole-grain breakfast cereals, for a hair-healthy dose of zinc, iron, and B vitamins.

A whole-grain snack can also be a great go-to food when your energy is zapped halfway through the afternoon, and you've still got hours to go before dinner.

Healthy Hair Food No. 8: Oysters

Oysters may be better known for their reputation as an aphrodisiac, but they can also lead to healthy hair. The key to their love and hair-boosting abilities is zinc — a powerful antioxidant.

In addition to getting it from whole grains and nuts, you can also get zinc from beef and lamb.

Healthy Hair Food No. 9: Dairy Products

Low-fat dairy products like skim milk and yogurt are great sources of calcium, an important mineral for hair growth. They also contain whey and casein, two high-quality protein sources.

For some healthy hair foods "to-go," try throwing a yogurt or cottage cheese cup in your bag when you head out in the morning to snack on later in the day. You can even boost their hair benefits by stirring in a couple of tablespoons of ground flaxseeds or walnuts for omega-3 fatty acids and zinc.

Healthy Hair Food No. 10: Carrots

Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A, which promotes a healthy scalp along with good vision. Since a healthy scalp is essential for a shiny, well-conditioned head of hair, you'd be wise to include carrots in your diet as snacks or toppings on your salad.

Big Picture: Balanced Diet for Healthy Hair

When it comes to foods for healthy hair and beauty, variety is the best way to go.

"An overall balanced diet of lean proteins, fruits, and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and fatty fish like salmon and low-fat dairy will help keep hair healthy," Giancoli says.

"Crash diets can affect the hair cycle". "Losing a significant amount of weight in a short amount of time can affect that normal hair rhythm. Two to three months later, you might notice a significant increase in shedding. This is a temporary problem that you recover from with a well-rounded diet."

Source: WebMD



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CDC: Nearly 1 in 10 U.S. adults depressed

Nine percent of U.S. adults have at least some symptoms of depression, and people in certain states are more likely to be depressed than those in others, according to the results of a nationwide survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Mississippi had the highest depression rate in the nation, with 14.8 percent of residents reporting two or more symptoms of the condition, such as feeling hopeless, taking little interest or pleasure in everyday activities, and having trouble concentrating (Other states at the top of the list included West Virginia (14.3 percent), Alabama (13 percent), Oklahoma (11.3 percent), Tennessee (11 percent), and Louisiana (10.8 percent), according to the survey, which was conducted in 2006 and 2008. North Dakota, with 4.8 percent, had the lowest rate of depression symptoms in the nation. Many of the states with high depression rates also have above-average rates of obesity, heart disease, and other chronic health conditions.

"Depression can both precipitate and exacerbate the symptoms of a chronic disease," Epidemiologists say. For example, if someone is depressed and they have diabetes, they may be less likely to stick to their treatment regimen in terms of their insulin and eating appropriately. Those things are definitely linked.

Relatively high poverty levels and lack of access to mental health care may also have contributed to the depression rates in some Southeastern states.

Overall, 3.4 percent of the survey respondents met the criteria for clinical depression, which is defined as experiencing five or more depressive symptoms on most days of the week.

The rates of clinical depression varied widely according to life circumstances. People who were divorced (6.6 percent) or never married (4.1 percent) were more likely to be clinically depressed than married people (2.2 percent), for instance.

Not surprisingly—given the economic nosedive that was under way in 2008—depression rates also appeared to be linked to job status.

Roughly 10 percent of unemployed people and 22 percent of people who were disabled or otherwise unable to work met the criteria for clinical depression, compared with just 2 percent of those who had a job. And the depression rate was roughly twice as high among people without health insurance as it was among insured people. "Depression is common," but very treatable. October 7 is National Depression Screening Day. The CDC urges people who suspect they may be depressed to take an online self-assessment at mentalhealthscreening.org.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/>



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